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Allan Coppedge

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THEOLOGY OF DISCIPLESHIP

DO712

Dr. Allan Coppedge

Fall 1998

I. PURPOSE

To provide a setting in which the student can develop understanding of the theology of discipleship with a special concern for the role of the small group, while at the same time being experientially involved in discipleship small group training.

II. OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the biblical and theological bases of discipleship and small groups. See attached sheet for details on Discipleship Philosophy.
2. To sharpen one's understanding of the several parts of the theory and practice of discipleship and small groups so as to be able to teach/impart them to others.
3. To participate in the process of discipleship training by leading a small group.
4. To read and critically evaluate some of the growing body of literature on the theology and practice of discipleship.
5. To understand how discipleship and small groups relates to the distinctive emphases of Wesleyan theology.

III. STANDARDS (for those taking the course for three hours)

1. The student shall be able to articulate verbally or in written form the biblical and theological base of any of the major areas of discipleship covered in the course.
2. The student shall incorporate certain spiritual disciplines into life patterns, as a part of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. See attached sheet for details on A Discipleship Covenant.
3. The student shall be able to critically review and discuss the major books and authors covered in the course.

IV. COMPONENTS

The class is divided into three parts. Those taking the class for three hours of credit will do all three components. Those taking the class for two hours of credit will do the first two components.

- A. Two day training seminars: September 3-4.
- B. Leading a small group every week throughout the term.
- C. Meeting for one hour per week for additional biblical/theological foundations for discipleship and small groups. Class meets Tuesday, 3:50 – 4:50 p.m.

V. REQUIREMENTS

A. For those taking the course for **three hours credit**:

1. Reading and evaluation of assigned materials and completion of study assignments. A collateral chart (to be described in class) is to be kept which should include a record of the number of hours per week spent reading, taking notes, preparing your own teaching class presentations, (but not hours spent in personal disciplines, a discipleship group, or study for examinations). The number of hours studied will determine the grade options available to the student. To be eligible to earn any grade up through and "A" a total of at least 26 hours should be spent over the term or about 2 hours per week. For a "B" at least 24 hours per term. For a "C" at least 22 hours per term.
2. Preparation of a notebook of teaching materials for a lay course of 10-12 weeks on discipleship. Material to come from your assigned and other readings. Each lesson should have a detailed outline for teaching plus complementary material for notes and readings.
3. Completion of designated spiritual disciplines on a weekly basis. See attached sheets on Discipleship Covenant.
4. Meeting once a week for at least two hours with a discipleship or small group in which there is accountability for the required spiritual disciplines. Members of discipleship groups will lead the group through one of the Guidebooks to Mature Discipleship produced by the Barnabas Foundation.
5. A final examination on Friday, December 18, 10:00 a.m.

B. For those taking the course for **two hours credit**:

1. The two hour course is for credit/no credit.
2. Participation in the two day intensive seminar (attendance at all sessions required) September 3-4.
3. Leading a small group throughout the term once each week. A report of your group meetings to be kept on the collateral chart.
4. Attendance at three or two leaders meetings throughout the term. The type of group you lead will determine which group of leaders you meet with. A report of your participation in these meetings is to be kept on your collateral chart.
5. Read The Biblical Principles of Discipleship and report this on your collateral sheet.
6. Your collateral chart is to be returned to Dr. Coppedge through SPO910 by December 14 during exam week.

VI. CLASS ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION

Class attendance and participation is assumed. More than two unexcused absences during the term for class or the discipleship group could adversely affect the student's final grade. Participation in all sessions of the intensive training September 3-4 is essential for all members of class.

Out of courtesy to other members of the seminar, it is requested that no food or beverage be brought to class.

VII. TEXTBOOKS

1. Required:

Allan Coppedge, The Biblical Principles of Discipleship

Robert Coleman, The Master Plan of Evangelism

Bill Hull, The Disciple Making Pastor

Allan Coppedge, God's Purpose For You

2. Recommended:

Leroy Eims, The Lost Art of Disciplemaking

3. Requested: Holy Bible in class.

DISCIPLESHIP PHILOSOPHY

OBJECTIVES

- I. To covenant together **to be the disciples** of Jesus Christ according to the pattern God has established in the Scripture.
 - A. Although we believe that we are both redeemed and sanctified by the grace of God, we wish to be obedient to the Lord's injunction to work out our salvation in fear and trembling, and we are convinced that the disciplines of discipleship are essential if we are to seek after God with all our hearts and serve Him with all our being.
 - B. With godly men and women of many generations we believe we are to love God, enjoy Him forever, and serve Him with all our might, and that we are to do this both individually and collectively as the body of Christ.
 - C. We are convinced that the specific disciplines to which we are committing ourselves are concrete expression of our desire
 1. to be fully conformed to the likeness of God in righteousness and true holiness,
 2. to get God's best in every area of our lives,
 3. to serve Him as effectively as possible with our whole hearts.
- II. **To make disciples** of all nations according to Jesus' instructions in the Great Commission. For our "ministry" objective we commit ourselves to make disciples according to Jesus' pattern of evangelism (baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit) and training believers in the principles/disciplines of Christian discipleship in a small group (teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you).
 - A. We commit ourselves to a long-range goal of being part of the Lord's team for fulfilling the Great Commission.
 - B. We commit ourselves to certain short-range goals which form a part of the larger objective:
 1. To give ourselves wholeheartedly to getting the best possible seminary education as part of God's preparation for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.
 2. To stimulate others to recognize their responsibility as disciples of Jesus Christ and assist in training them in the principles and disciplines of Christian discipleship. We are convinced that the principle of multiplying the members of the team is strategic for fulfilling the long-range objective (the Great Commission).
 - a. Concretely this means meeting together weekly with two to six like-minded disciples for the purpose of stirring up one another in love to build the disciplines/principles of Christian discipleship into our lives.

DISCIPLESHIP COVENANT

Part One: Personal Commitments

Biblical covenants were about relationships with God and with other people following Him.

I desire to enter into a covenant with God to know and love Him. To do this I desire to develop relationships with other persons seeking to follow Him as His disciples. To appropriate the grace I need to cultivate my relationship with God and my fellow disciples, I commit myself to the following means that He has given for that purpose.

A. FOR DEVELOPING AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TRIUNE GOD, I WILL:

1. Seek every day to know God by spending significant time _____ in personal devotion.
These times in devotion will include:
 - a. Reading and studying the Word of God. (II Tim. 2:15)
 - b. Prayer, including intercessory prayer for each member of the covenant fellowship by name. (Daniel 6:10)
 - c. Memorizing and meditating on God's Word. (Josh. 1:8)
2. Seeking to hide God's Word in my heart. I will memorize a minimum of _____ verses of Scripture per week and review previous verses learned.
3. Worshipping the Lord by regular attendance at public worship (Luke 4:16) as one of the ways to keep the Sabbath holy. (Exodus 20:8-11)
4. Fast at least two meals per week as a means of self-denial and haring God more clearly. Many in the Barnabas Fellowship are using Friday at noon as one of these times. (Acts 13:2,3)
5. Be a good steward of the resources that God has entrusted to me by desiring to give a minimum of a tithe of my income to God as a continuous reminder that He is Lord of all my resources (Mal. 3:8-12, II Cor. 9:6-8, Phil. 4:14-19)

B. FOR DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS, I WILL:

1. Lead (or participate) in daily family worship in our home.
2. Meet together weekly with a covenant fellowship of like-minded disciples to stir up one another in love to build into our lives the principles/disciplines of Christian discipleship. (Heb. 10:24-25)

C. TO HELP ME BE AT MY BEST AS A FOLLOWER OF JESUS AND A FELLOW DISCIPLE, I COMMIT MYSELF TO THE FOLLOWING PERSONAL DISCIPLINES:

DISCIPLESHIP COVENANT

Part Two: Group Commitments

1. We will meet every week until _____ (date) after which the group will be evaluated before continuing.
2. We will meet on _____ (day) from _____ (time) to _____, and strive to start and close on time.
3. We will meet at _____ (location)
4. We agree to the following group disciplines:
Attendance: To give top priority to the group meetings.
Participation: To share responsibility for the group in all its activities.
Confidentiality: To keep anything said in the group strictly confidential.
Accountability: To give permission to group members to hold each other accountable to my discipleship covenant.
Accessibility: To give one another the right to call upon one another in time of need.
5. Regular group agenda will include: (for discipleship groups)
Sharing, Bible Study, Prayer, Worship, Reporting and Memory Verse Review.
ACG groups will select from these for their agenda.
6. Our specific goals this semester/quarter are:

7. I want the group to hold me accountable to the following personal disciplines:
e.g., regular physical exercise.
e.g., regular schedule of significant reading.

I Agree to Honor This Covenant: _____ (signature)

WORKSHEET ON COVENANT COMMITMENTS

*As you pray over your personal covenant commitments,
Here are some helps in the areas where you will need to discover the Lord's goals
For you for the next semester/quarter.*

A. SIGNIFIANT TIME WITH THE LORD

The following are some historical options many have found helpful in their walk with the Lord.

1. Two hours/day. The time Wesley asked of his preachers.
2. A tithe of a waking day (1 hour 40 minutes). Many Barnabas leaders are committed to this option.
3. A tithe of a twelve hour day (1 hour 10 minute).
4. 1 hour/day. This was Wesley's challenge to lay people.
5. 45 minutes/day.
6. 30 minutes/day. A possible beginning place for disciples iin a local congregation.
7. Other significant time _____ (more than 30 minutes;

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

We suggest memorizing one, two or three verses per week. More verses per week are possible, but it Makes consistent review difficult.

The Barnabas Foundation has a list of suggested verses to learn.

B. FAMILY WORSHIP

Each group member should determine appropriate time and activities for worship.

Time:

Activities: